

Louise Giovanelli

*Here on Earth*

26 March – 18 May 2024

White Cube Hong Kong

White Cube is pleased to present British artist Louise Giovanelli's second solo exhibition with the gallery and her first in Hong Kong. Exploring the tension between representation and materiality, figuration and abstraction, Giovanelli's works consider the significance and history of painting as a system of representation. 'Here on Earth' features new oil paintings, which expand and reform found imagery. The artist's luminous and intensely worked surfaces bring notions of theatricality and performance to the fore, traced through source material as wide ranging as Greek myth, old-master paintings and twentieth-century film-making.

In 'Here on Earth', Giovanelli debuts the series 'Maenad' (2023–24), which comprises figurative oil paintings based on 1980s film stills. The title refers to the female followers of Dionysus – the Greek god of wine, fertility, festivity, ritual madness, religious ecstasy and theatre – who were often portrayed as wild and frenzied, engaging in dance, music and drinking in honour of their god. Building on her previous 'Entheogen' (2023) works, 'Maenad' continues Giovanelli's exploration of religious iconography, transubstantiation and the relationship between devotion, ritual and ecstasy. Used in sacred or spiritual contexts to facilitate a connection with the divine realms, an entheogen is a psychoactive substance that induces altered states of consciousness, perception or behaviour. In both of these series, Giovanelli depicts women with their eyes closed and lips parted expectantly, caught somewhere between anticipation and euphoria.

For 'Maenad', Giovanelli drew particular inspiration from the Eleusinian Mysteries: ancient Greek rituals dedicated to the cult of Demeter and Persephone, in which participants were believed to undergo transcendental experiences facilitated by a drink or 'potion' known as kykeon. Although the exact details of the Mysteries were known only to initiates, women were believed to play a crucial role in the performance of the rites. The mystery cult of Dionysus, which also included rites open only to members, shares a number of themes with that of Demeter and Persephone, notably the cycles of life, death and fertility. The rituals performed by the Maenad were an integral part of the ceremonies worshipping the god. Giovanelli's paintings can be understood as an embodiment of this ancient history, as she centres female figures, picturing them in isolated moments of ambiguous yet sublime elation. The exhibition title serves as a bridge between these intangible experiences and the physical world,

forging connections between the spiritual and the corporeal through the materiality of paint and the interaction between artwork and viewer 'here on earth'.

Several of the paintings in the 'Maenad' series employ a redoubling technique, layering another film still, taken seconds later, over the first. In some instances, the same frame is repeated across different canvases, featuring almost imperceptible variations in the image placement or cropping. These gestures reinforce the work's relationship to the cinematic moment, simultaneously referencing the momentum of film and distilling its climax. In her paintings, Giovanelli often returns to the same motif or single image, making small adjustments each time, in both framing and colour – for example, a different underpainting, pigment or oil. This process is one of discovery for the artist, who uses painting as a method for revelation and as a testing ground for the validity of her own ideas. Throughout the exhibition, Giovanelli's visual devices – layers, splits, glitches, repetitions – hint at something unseen beneath the image. This is a way, according to the artist, 'of being honest about the fact that it comes from a digital image [...] to throw you off and reveal what's going on underneath, to interrupt and disrupt the surface'.

In *Harmony* (2024) the seemingly private rapture of 'Maenad' is replaced by one shared between two figures. Here, Giovanelli depicts a scene in which two young film characters kiss with wide-open mouths. The artist has cropped the image, creating a tall, elongated format that belies its origins in cinema. This also emphasises its more formal qualities, so that the meeting point of their lips comes to resemble the yin-yang symbol – an icon that represents opposing but interconnected forces.

The largest painting in the exhibition, *Threadsoul* (2024), sees Giovanelli return to a familiar motif: the curtain. Curtains hold an interesting history for Giovanelli, for their changeable role and their presence in both low and high culture: theatres, ballrooms, strip clubs, tired function rooms. A curtain marks a threshold; there is always a behind and a front, and the idea of some form of opening and closing. In 'Here on Earth', the vast curtain acts as a backdrop for the exhibition. Densely pleated and permanently closed, it signals a promise of spectacle, of revelation and surprise from Giovanelli's cast of performers – one that can never be fulfilled.



Louise Giovanelli

在此地

2024年3月26日- 5月18日

白立方香港

白立方欣然呈现英国艺术家路易丝·乔瓦内利 (Louise Giovanelli) 与画廊合作的第二场个展,也是她在香港的首次亮相。乔瓦内利的作品探索了表象与物质性、具象与抽象之间的张力,并将绘画的历史和重要性视为一种表现系统。“在此地”

(Here on Earth) 着重呈现了艺术家的全新油画作品,对现成图像进行了拓展及改造。艺术家笔下鲜亮且浓重的画作表面,通过希腊神话、古典大师画以及20世纪的电影制作等广泛素材为线索,突出了作品中戏剧性和表演概念的重要性。

本次展览中,乔瓦内利首次展出了她的“迈那得斯 (Maenad) ”系列 (2023-24),主要由基于20世纪80年代电影剧照而创作的具象油画组成。标题“迈那得斯 (Maenad) ”指的是酒神狄俄尼索斯 (Dionysus) 的女性追随者;狄俄尼索斯是希腊神话中的酒神、生育之神、节日之神、仪式狂欢之神、宗教狂喜之神以及戏剧之神,而迈那得斯则通常被描述为野性疯狂、纵情于舞蹈、音乐和饮酒的酒神追随者。在此前“宗教致幻剂 (Entheogen) ” (2023) 系列作品的基础上,“迈那得斯”系列延续了艺术家对宗教图像、变体论 (transubstantiation) 以及虔诚、仪式和狂喜之间关系的探索。宗教致幻剂是一种在神圣或精神领域使用以促进与神连接交流的物质,作为一种作用于精神的药物,可诱发意识、感知或行为状态的改变。在这两个系列中,乔瓦内利都描绘了正处于期待与亢奋之间的女性形象,她们闭着双眼、嘴巴张开并且表情充满期望。

乔瓦内利创作“迈那得斯”的灵感,尤其来自于“厄琉西斯密仪” (Eleusinian Mysteries)。这是一种崇拜德墨忒耳

(Demeter) 和珀耳塞福涅 (Persephone) 的古希腊秘密仪式,参与者会在一种名为“Kykeon”的饮品或者说“魔药”的帮助下获得超凡体验。尽管只有入会者才知道这一仪式的具体细节,但人们相信女性在这一仪式中扮演着重要角色。对酒神狄俄尼索斯的神秘崇拜也包括只对成员开放的仪式,它与德墨忒耳和珀耳塞福涅的崇拜有着许多相同的主题,尤其是关于生命、死亡和生育的轮回。迈那得斯们所举行的仪式是祭神庆典不可分割的一部分。乔瓦内利的画作可以被视作这一古老历史的体现:她以女性形象为中心,描绘了她们处于模糊暧昧却又崇高狂喜的单独时刻下的状态。展览标题同时也是这些无形体验与物质世界之间的桥梁,通过颜料的物质性以及艺术作品与观者之间“在此地”的当下交流,建立起精神与肉体间的联系。

“迈那得斯”系列中的几幅作品采用了重叠倍增 (redoubling) 技术,即几秒钟后拍摄一张电影剧照,并将得到的照片叠加在第一张照片之上。在某些情况下,同一画面会在不同的画布上重复出现,并在图像位置或裁剪上出现几乎难以察觉的改动。这些人物姿态强化了作品与电影瞬时的关系,既指出了电影本身的运动特质同时提炼了其高潮时刻。在她的画作中,乔瓦内利经常回到同一个主题或单张图像,并且每次都会在取景和色彩上进行细微调整。例如,使用不同的底色、颜料或油彩。这一过程对于艺术家而言是一个发现的过程,她将绘画作为一种寻获真相以及检验自己想法是否正确的试验场。在整个展览中,乔瓦内利的视觉手段——层叠、分割、小差错、重复——都暗示着

图像之下不可见之物。她认为,这是一种“坦诚面对事实的方式,这一事实是它来自于一张数字图像[.....]这让你感到迷惑并且揭露了表面之下发生了什么,以试图打断和扰乱表面”。

在《和谐》(Harmony, 2024) 中,“迈那得斯”看似私密的狂喜被两个人物之间共享的狂喜所取代。在这幅作品中,乔瓦内利描绘了两个电影中的年轻角色张大嘴巴接吻的场景。艺术家对画面进行了裁剪,创造出高而细长的画面格式,使其脱离了实则源自电影的背景。这也突出了作品更为形式上的特质,两个角色嘴唇的交汇点酷似阴阳符号——一种代表对立但力量相互连接的符号。

展览中尺幅最大的画作《Threadsoul》(灵魂之线, 2024) 见证了乔瓦内利回归其熟悉的一个主题:帷幕。对乔瓦内利来说,帷幕蕴含有趣的历史。它们角色多变,随处可见于低俗或高雅的文化场景中:剧院、舞厅、脱衣舞俱乐部、破旧的功能性场所。帷幕标志着一道门槛,总是分隔出了前后两部分,并且具有某种形式的开启和关闭。在本次展览中,巨大的窗帘成为了展览的背景。褶皱密布、永远关闭的帷幕预示着乔瓦内利的一众表演者们将带来的奇观、启示和惊喜——但这一承诺似乎永远无法实现。

## BIOGRAPHY

路易丝·乔瓦内利 (Louise Giovanelli, 1993 年生于伦敦) 目前工作和生活于英国曼彻斯特。她于2015年获得英国曼彻斯特艺术学院学士学位后, 并在法兰克福国立艺术学院 (Städelschule) 学习 (2018-2020), 师从 艾米·席尔曼 (Amy Sillman)。她的个展经历包括: Moon Grove画廊, 英国曼彻斯特 (2023); 英国曼彻斯特艺术画廊 (2019); The Grundy画廊, 英国布莱克浦 (Blackpool), 2016。乔瓦内利的作品也曾参加多次群展, 包括纽约 FLAG 艺术基金会 (2023)、伦敦海沃德美术馆 (Hayward Gallery, 2021)、阿姆斯特丹AkzoNobel艺术基金会 (2021) 以及英国伍斯特The Art House (2019)。

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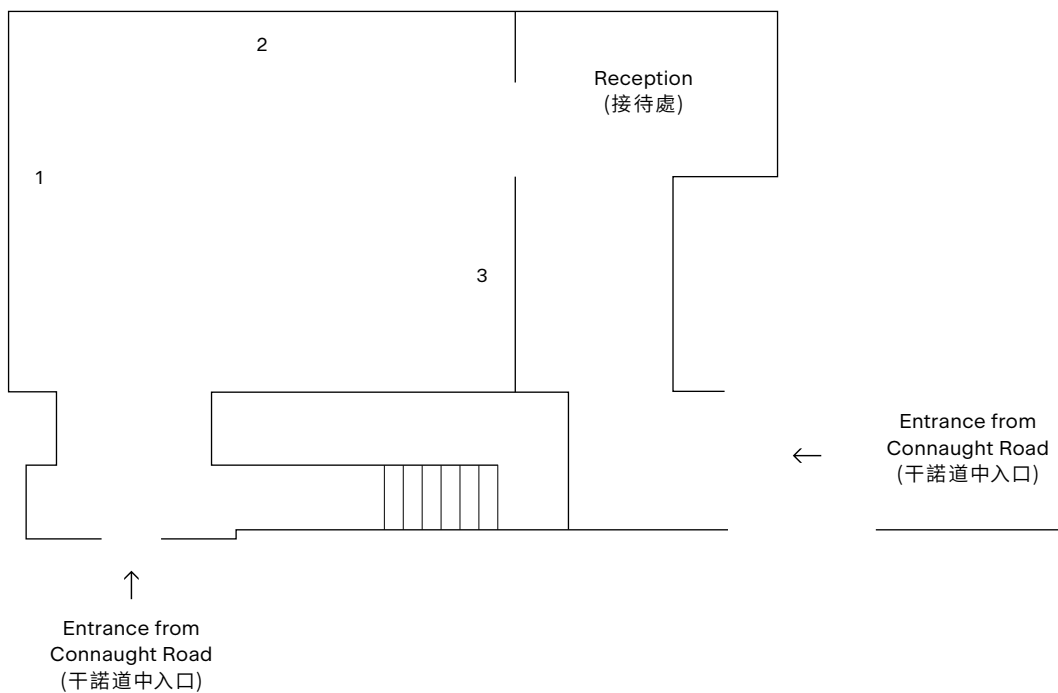
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GROUND FLOOR

- 1 *Maenad*  
2024  
Oil on linen  
250 × 180 cm | 98<sup>7</sup>/<sub>16</sub> × 70<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.
- 2 *Threadsoul*  
2024  
Oil on linen  
300 × 510 cm | 118<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> × 200<sup>13</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.
- 3 *Maenad*  
2024  
Oil on linen  
200 × 150 cm | 78<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> × 59<sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.



FIRST FLOOR

- 4 *Harmony*  
2024  
Oil on linen  
90 × 50 cm | 35 <sup>7</sup>/<sub>16</sub> × 19 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.
- 5 *Maenad*  
2024  
Oil on linen  
250 × 200 cm | 98 <sup>7</sup>/<sub>16</sub> × 78 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in.
- 6 *Maenad*  
2024  
Oil on linen  
250 × 200 cm | 98 <sup>7</sup>/<sub>16</sub> × 78 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in.
- 7 *Maenad*  
2023  
Oil on linen  
250 × 150 cm | 98 <sup>7</sup>/<sub>16</sub> × 59 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.
- 8 *Maenad*  
2023  
Oil on linen  
250 × 180 cm | 98 <sup>7</sup>/<sub>16</sub> × 70 <sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.

